

San Clemente Life Held Austere

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LONG BEACH, Calif., Oct. 27 — Far from being a plush, federally supported palace in austere, under-financed, and exile, life at San Clemente is "like a ghost town," according

to Ron Ziegler, press aide to former President Nixon.

"Someday people are going to wake up and find just how a former President is being treated," said Ziegler. "If you take away Watergate, or even include it, if people would

take a look at what has been provided for former presidents, Mr. Nixon is getting 1 per cent."

Ziegler was answering reporters' questions after a medical press conference by Mr. Nixon's physicians at Memorial Hospital in Long Beach. Although the impromptu press conference began as a follow-up on Mr. Nixon's condition, Ziegler brought the subject around to the issue of Mr. Nixon's San Clemente lifestyle since he resigned Aug. 9 and moved there.

Ziegler, who seemed prepared for the occasion, picked off these examples of deprivation:

- **Staff** Ziegler sharply contested claims that 22 or more people on the federal payroll were working directly for Mr. Nixon. "We do not have an excessive staff. We have 10 people here, most of them secretaries," Ziegler said, not 22 as reported in an article in Sunday's Parade Magazine, or 64, the figure he said was used elsewhere.

"We don't have 64 people down there serving the President, the figure refers to the Coast Guard people who maintain the Coast Guard facilities."

The 10 staff members he referred to include himself, former white House aide Stephen Bull (who, Ziegler said, is leaving soon); Lt. Col. Jack Brennan, a military aide; Franklin Gannon, a special assistant, five secretaries or secretary-assistants, and a medical corpsman.

Ziegler excluded from his list of personal staff the Secret Service, three drivers (whom he described as "really handymen"); 14 communications personnel who he said were assigned not only to the former President, but to the Secret Service and to dismantle equipment used during Mr. Nixon's presidency; and several GSA employees used to support the Secret Service and the portion of the compound that serves as federal office space for the former President.

"We all tend to get discouraged when we read in the newspaper we're running some plush operation in San Clemente," said Ziegler. "It's really 'is like a ghost town.'"

- **Funds.** Ziegler complained that since Congress has not yet appropriated transition money, San Clemente is being run virtually on a shoestring. He estimated that, other than staff salaries, Mr. Nixon has available only \$50,000 to maintain the compound, answer mail and begin to sort his presidential papers.

Ziegler said the former President, since leaving office, has received more than 700,000 pieces of mail, which have gone unanswered for lack of funds and personnel.

"The gals are doubling up and trying to spend only \$10 a day," he said, referring to secretaries and office work.

- **Personal Costs.** Ziegler revealed, apparently for the first time, that Mr. Nixon does not have health insurance, and must pay for his hospitalization and treatment out of his own pocket.

He also pointed to "nuisance subpoenas"—about 14—from individuals, "all of that costs money, of course, and substantial legal costs are building up."